

**MONTANA PUBLIC DEFENDER COMMISSION
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**

Draft Minutes

Office of the State Public Defender – Central Office

Butte, Montana

December 6, 2006

Call to Order

The meeting of the Budget Committee of the Montana Public Defender Commission was called to order by Budget Committee Chairman Doug Kaercher at 7:30 a.m. Budget Committee meetings will be conducted as public meetings from now on.

Commissioners Present

Stephen Nardi; Jennifer Hensley; Doug Kaercher

Other Interested Parties

Scott Crichton, Executive Director, American Civil Liberties Union

Staffing Report

The committee reviewed the staffing report. There are still some vacant positions. Commissioner Nardi emphasized the importance of adequate support staff to ensure efficient use of attorney time.

Financial Results 7/1/06 through 11/30/06

Personal services is slightly low due to the fact that the budget expenditure rate is linear and our staffing plan ramps up over time. Our actual costs should be in line with budget by fiscal year end. Operating costs are mostly payments to private attorneys for public defender work. The current trend for five months (four months of data) has not yet showed a downward trend in expenditures. The contractor transition is almost complete. The current supplemental request is \$3.3 million, and that will be reviewed in January to see if it is still on target. The Appellate program has totally expended its operating budget for the year, primarily due to a death penalty case that accounted for \$60,000 in contracted services.

2009 Biennium Governor's Budget Submission/Legislative Write-up

The Governor's budget submission was reviewed. It doesn't include all of our funding requests.

Old Business/New Business (*Action Items)

There were no action items.

Public Comment

Mr. Crichton expressed his willingness to support the OPD budget during the legislative session.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 a.m.